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Policies and Procedures Minutes 01/04/2008

Approved January 18, 2008

*Arlington School Committee
Policies and Procedures Subcommittee
January 4, 2008*

Members present:

Ron Spangler, Chair
Sean Garballey
Jeff Thielman

Also present

Topher Heigham, Bishop Parent

The meeting was called to order at 8:36 AM.

1. Approval of Minutes, December 11, 2007

On a motion by Mr. Thielman, seconded by Mr. Garballey, it was VOTED 3-0 to approve the minutes of the December 11, 2007 meeting.

2. Old Business

The subcommittee discussed the process of self-evaluation required by policy BBA: *Evaluation of School Committee Operational Procedures*. Mr. Thielman reported that this had last been done in 2004-05 at a committee retreat, facilitated by Jim Hardy of the Massachusetts Association of School Committees (MASC) using a MASC evaluation instrument. Mr. Spangler reported that he had spoken to the Chair about doing the same at the February retreat, and that she was in general agreement. Mr. Spangler also noted that the policy requires the committee to set the date for its next self-evaluation at the conclusion of the previous one. Mr. Thielman recalled that this was not done, but that the '04-05 committee had expressed a desire to do it annually, though in the end this was not done. All agreed that with only two members remaining from the '04-05 committee, the time is ripe for a new self-evaluation.

3. Policy Calendar

Mr. Spangler presented the Policy Calendar for subcommittee review and approval, per the newly revised policy BGE: *Policy Dissemination*. In his presentation, he noted that the calendar as-is is not perfect, and should be continuously reviewed for errors and omissions. He also noted that the process of assembling the calendar corresponds loosely to a less-intensive policy review (as mandated under policy BGC), and that it would be advisable at some future date to revise BGC to ensure that the policy calendar is reviewed and updated alongside the policy book.

Mr. Spangler made the following specific observations:

- The financial report of booster clubs required under policy JJ: *Co-curricular and extracurricular activities*, has not been received.
- Policy GCBA: *Professional Staff Salary Schedules* ... is not being followed.
- The committee has not received the information required under policy IGA: *Curriculum Development*.
- The committee has not received the report required under policy KFD: *Surplus Space Policy for Extended Day Programs*.
- The committee has not received the report required under policy AC/ACA: *Policy of Harassment & Discrimination*.
- The committee has not reviewed and approved all handbooks as required under policy BGD/CHB: *School Committee Review of Regulations*.
- It is not clear that the committee has designated a legislative representative annually, as required under policy BJ: *School Committee Legislative Program*.
- The committee has not seen an annual evaluation of the administrative intern program per policy CJ: *Administrative Intern*

Program.

- It is not clear when the committee last received a report under policy EFC: *Free & Reduced Price Food Services*.
- The committee may not be receiving and approving job description changes annually as required by policy GCA:

Professional Staff Positions.

- Policy GCBB: *Employment of Principals*, has a due date for the school improvement plan that is inconsistent with state law and our recent policy change.

On a motion by Mr. Garballey, seconded by Mr. Thielman, it was VOTED 3-0 to recommend the full committee change the due date on policy GCBB: *Employment of Principals*, to from April 1 to July 1. The proposed amendment is attached hereto as **Exhibit A**.

Mr. Spangler also wondered if the Wellness Policy was on track for full implementation by September 2008, as required in that policy. Mr. Garballey believed that the date is 9/1/2009, and will check with Cindy Bouvier and report back at the next meeting.

On a motion by Mr. Thielman, seconded by Mr. Garballey, it was VOTED 3-0 to recommend the Policy Calendar, attached hereto as **Exhibit B**, be adopted by the full committee.

4. Policy BBA: School Committee Powers and Duties

Mr. Spangler summarized MGL 71:37, MGL 71:59, and relevant provisions of the Town Manager Act, as well as his review of Arlington and other districts' policies in this area. See **Exhibit C**. The subcommittee discussed possible revisions to Arlington's policy, to better reflect actual practice and areas of responsibility. (Mr. Garballey left at 9:15.) Mr. Spangler remarked that powers and duties appear to be defined haphazardly throughout our very thick policy book, so revision of this policy while necessary will not be sufficient. Mr. Spangler will draft a revised policy for the subcommittee's review at a future meeting.

5. New Business

The subcommittee discussed recent decisions of the Massachusetts School Building Authority (MSBA) and how these relate to the Thompson school. Mr. Spangler related the recent vote of the Permanent Town Building Committee to engage a consultant to help the School Department lobby MSBA for a better deal, and wondered if this should have been a School Committee decision based on Section 15 of the Town Manager Act.

6. Next Meeting

Tentatively set for Friday, January 18th at 8:30am, pending Mr. Garballey's availability.

7. Adjourn

On a motion by Mr. Thielman, seconded by Mr. Spangler, it was VOTED 2-0 to adjourn at 9:36 am.

File: GCBB

EMPLOYMENT OF PRINCIPALS

Principals shall be employed by the Arlington Public Schools under individual contracts of employment. Said contracts shall be submitted to the School Committee for their approval of all terms concerning compensation/benefits, prior to the formal presentation of a contract of employment to the Principal. The compensation/benefit levels, above referenced, may be exceeded only with the approval of the School Committee.

Contracts issued to Principals will be up to three years in length, and may be reissued by the Superintendent at levels of compensation/benefits, determined by the School Committee, provided that the Superintendent may employ a Principal under the terms and conditions of the previous contract of employment.

As a condition of employment, each Principal must maintain current certification, adhere to the policies and goals of the School

Committee and the directives of the Superintendent, and annually before April 1 July 1 must submit, with the school council, the educational goals and school improvement plan for the school building(s) under his/her direction.

1. MGL

a. MGL 71:37

The school committee ...

- shall have the power to **select and to terminate the superintendent**,
- shall **review and approve budgets** for public education in the district, and
- shall **establish educational goals and policies** for the schools in the district consistent with the requirements of law and statewide goals and standards established by the board of education.

Pretty simple.

b. MGL 71:59

In addition to hiring and setting comp for Super, SC has power to create assistant/associate positions, set comp, and approve hiring

2. MASC

- Many committees do approve job descriptions and changes thereto
- Some committees review principal and other admin contracts for compliance with district personnel policy and budgeted compensation
- Approval of committee for a principal's contract is not required (by state law)

3. Other districts' BBA

Arlington

... "exercises whatever authority and responsibility for public education in Arlington has not been expressly reserved by the State

Bedford

"The School Committee takes a broad view of its functions..."

Policy, Appraisal (includes adopting job descriptions for all employees), and Provision of Fiscal Resources (reserve all powers not explicitly reserved by the Commonwealth)

Concord/Concord-Carlisle

Also "takes a broad view of its functions":

1. Legislative or policymaking.
2. Appraisal. (evaluating the effectiveness of its policies and their implementation.)
3. Provision of financial resources.
4. Public relations.
5. Educational planning and evaluation.

Says in Legal Refs: "M.G.L. 71:37 specifically, but powers and duties of school committees are established throughout the Massachusetts General Laws." *Nice statement that we should consider adding to our policy.*

East Bridgewater, Holyoke, Ludlow, Lynnfield, Malden, Marblehead, Shawsheen,

Almost exactly same as Concord (same 5 points)... and similar to Bedford ... must be MASC template ... see last page of this doc for E. Bridgewater policy/template

Randolph

As above, but adds under financial resources: "The Committee shall review and approve the budgets for public education and shall inform the Superintendent about the budget and necessary budgetary limitations. The Committee shall determine appropriate levels of compensation for administrative positions upon the advice and information of the Superintendent and shall inform the Superintendent about levels of compensation prior to administrative appointments.

Upper Cape Regional

1. Employing a Superintendent-Director.
2. Adopting salary schedules for all personnel.
3. Determining the number of teachers and other employees in the school district after considering the recommendations of the Superintendent-Director.
4. Discussing and evaluating reports presented to it by the professional staff members relative to the instructional program.
5. Recommending areas requiring additional evaluation for study by the staff.
6. Approving and adopting an annual budget.
7. Proposing bond issues to the public for vote.
8. Adopting regulations for purchasing supplies and equipment.
9. Approving all purchases over a specified minimum amount.
10. Reviewing the audit of the school of the school district accounts and business procedures.
11. Deciding what construction should be undertaken.
12. Deciding upon major building renovations, maintenance policies, and additions after considering recommendations from the Superintendent-Director.
13. Employing school architects, as needed.
14. Employing consultants to advise it on plant needs.
15. Determining general policies affecting students.
16. Determining general requirements for graduation in accordance with the law.
17. Providing for the protection of health through school lunch programs, medical examinations, employment of a nurse and a school doctor.
18. Representing the school in various community functions.
19. Evaluating all other programs of the school district based upon the Superintendent-Director's reports and reports of other staff members.

SC has a lot of authority here. Some of these powers are also reserved to us in Arlington, but elsewhere. The Upper Cape policy does a nice job cross referencing their other policies that speak to SC powers and authority. *We should do that too.*

4. Apparent MASC template for BBA

SCHOOL COMMITTEE POWERS AND DUTIES

The school committee has all the powers conferred upon it by state law and must perform those duties mandated by the state.

These include the responsibility and right to determine policies and practices and to employ a staff to implement its directions for the proper education of the children of the community.

The committee takes a broad view of its functions. It sees them as:

1. Legislative or policy making - The committee is responsible for the development of policy as guides for administrative action and for employing a superintendent who will implement its policies.
2. Appraisal - The committee is responsible for evaluating the effectiveness of its policies and their implementation.
3. Provision of financial resources - The committee is responsible for adoption of a budget that will enable the school system to carry out the committee's policies.
4. Community relations - The committee is responsible for providing adequate and direct means for keeping the local citizenry informed about the schools and for keeping itself and the school staff informed about the needs and wishes of the public.
5. Educational planning and evaluation - The committee is responsible for establishing educational goals and policies that will guide the committee and staff for the administration and continuing improvement of the educational programs provided by the school district.

LEGAL REF.: M.G.L. 71:37 specifically, but powers and duties of school committees are established throughout the Massachusetts General Laws.

CROSS REF.: BB School Committee Legal Status